

BATTLEFIELD DECEPTION: ABANDONED IMPERATIVE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

**A MONOGRAPH
BY
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Infantry**



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First Term AY 97-98

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DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 3

19980324 141

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE 18 December 1997		3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED MONOGRAPH
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Battlefield Deception: Abandoned Imperative of the 21st century			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Major Bradley K Nelson				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) SEE ATTACHED				
14. SUBJECT TERMS			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 47	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UNLIMITED	

ABSTRACT

BATTLEFIELD DECEPTION: ABANDONED IMPERATIVE OF THE 21ST CENTURY by Major Bradley K. Nelson, Infantry, USA, 47 pages

This monograph examines the current readiness of the U. S. Army to conduct battlefield deception operations at the tactical level. The development of sophisticated intelligence collection systems and the automation of analysis has resulted in the need for deception in moderate warfare. At present the U. S. Army is re-evaluating its focus on deception and determining what capabilities are needed into the next century.

The study begins with a synopsis of deception theories to establish criteria to determine the proper foundation of which deception capabilities should be based on. It proceeds with a historical review and analysis of U. S. Army deception operations and experience from the Revolutionary War to the present. Next, it examines current U. S. Army tactical deception capabilities and evaluates this capability within the framework of leadership and education, doctrine, organizational structure, and the military decision making process. The final sections examine future implications on the use of deception on twenty first century battlefields and provides conclusions and recommendations based on the research presented.

This monograph concludes that the U. S. Army is inadequately prepared to conduct battlefield deception at the tactical level. This paper proposes recommendations that would restore sufficient capability within the U. S. Army divisional structure in order to conduct successful deception operations.

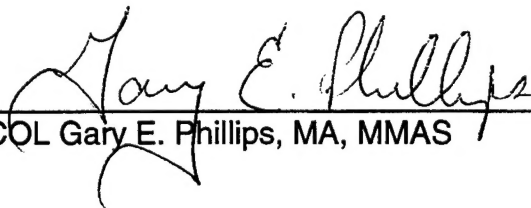
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Title of Monograph: *Battlefield Deception - Abandoned Imperative of the 21st Century*

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Accepted this 18th Day of December 1997

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 3

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PREFACE: ENGLISH CHANNEL OFF THE FRENCH COASTLINE

The many months of planning and deliberate preparation for the Allied landing in Normandy had finally come to a close. From his command post on the flag ship *Augusta*, 1st Army Commander, Lieutenant General Omar Bradley waited in anticipation for the initial reports from his assault force assigned to secure the Omaha beachhead. Much of the planning for the landing on Omaha beach focused on one particular coastal gun battery. A German battery consisting of six 155mm coastal guns, atop a cliff named Pointe du Hoc, dominated the seaborne approaches of landing craft scheduled to arrive on Omaha beach. The Allies believed that this German battery could place devastating fire on the troops as they approached the beaches concentrated in their assault landing craft. The position of this battery was regarded as the most dangerous in the American zone of attack, for the enemy guns of this caliber could cover not only the V and VII corps landing beaches but also both transport areas.¹ Properly manned these six guns could potentially decimate the invasion forces. Recognizing the obvious importance of this enemy weapon system and its possible effect on the invasion force, Allied airpower had flown bombing missions on 15 April, 22 May, and 4 June in an attempt to destroy the coastal battery. Unable to knock out the guns, Allied airpower shifted to other targets along the Normandy coastline from the Seine river outlet to Cherbourg to avoid portraying true allied intentions of the actual landing zone. To ensure this battery would be neutralized prior to the assault forces landing, the U.S. Ninth Airforce assigned 18 medium bombers the mission to attack the target between H-20 and H-5 minutes on the morning of 6 June. This gun battery

constituted the main target for air and sea preassault fires. To back up the air attacks, the battleships Texas and Arkansas positioned offshore would attempt to destroy the guns if the air attack proved unsuccessful.

In event the that the air and naval power could not prevail, a ground force would attempt to knock out the Point du Hoc battery. LTC James Rudder the Commander of the 2d Ranger battalion received the difficult mission and was ordered to destroy the guns prior to the arrival of the main seaborne landing force on Omaha beach as a final effort to silence the guns. Even with a multiple assets planned to attack this key target, LTG Bradley had made a critical decision to adjust the assembly area's for the assault landing craft outside the 155mm range fan. The consequences of this decision meant that the amphibious task forces would experience an increasing difficult task in getting up to the beaches, with rough sea's predicted on the morning of 6 June.

Unknown to the assault force the Germans, reinforced the defense of the Omaha beach area with an additional division, the veteran German 352d division. Planning for the initial assault on Omaha the American landing force expected to face the under strength, German 716th division. American lives hung in the balance as the assault troops began the movement on the landing craft from far out in the English channel. Of the 32 DD tanks embarked for the Omaha beach sectors, 27 would flounder in the heavy surf and sink during their approach to the beaches.² With little or no supporting tank and artillery fire the invading troops became fodder for the German infantry dug into the high ground overlooking the Omaha beach sector's. Effective direct and indirect fire rained down on the American infantry, the initial assault forces were stopped at along the beach. From the *Augusta*,

LTG Bradley experienced anxiety and hopelessness. From the sporadic reports, Bradley pieced together the unfolding disaster. Faced with an almost irreversible catastrophe at Omaha, he privately considered evacuating the remaining survivors and redirecting follow on echelons to Utah beach or the British beaches.³ Slowly the situation improved and the troops were finally able to fight their way inland off the beaches. The German first line of defense began to crack as soldiers push forward. The men of the 2d Ranger battalion scrambled up the Point du Hoc cliffs after suffering horrible casualties in the fight to reach the 155mm gun battery. Upon securing the top of Point du Hoc, the rangers were surprised to discover that what appeared to be a battery of 155mm guns was in reality six "Quaker guns" (logs pointed out to look like artillery pieces).⁴ The actual guns had been pulled out following the April and May bombing raids and hidden about a mile or two away where they were found and [later] spiked by the rangers.⁵ A German deception plan had almost destroyed the assault on Omaha [beach].⁶ The loss of the tanks supporting the 1st Infantry division assault resulted in the loss of hundreds of men within the [first] few minutes [of the assault].⁷

The deception plan expertly exploited a pre-existing belief held by the Americans. The target of the German deception, LTG Bradley fell victim to the exploitation of deception. By adjusting his assembly area's for the tank and infantry landing craft, Bradley contributed to the terrible casualties inflicted on the American forces. Firepower that could have easily targeted other critical enemy targets were wasted on the telephone poles.

INTRODUCTION

To prepare a sham action with sufficient thoroughness to impress an enemy requires a considerable expenditure of time and effort and the cost increases with the scale of deception.

Clausewitz. On War

The rapid development of advanced intelligence collection systems and automation of analysis has resulted in a rebirth of the need for deception in modern warfare. By the end of World War II, the U. S. Army proved it's ability to conduct successful deception operations, applying lessons from Allies and our own experiences from the battlefields in Europe and the Pacific. Since World War II, deception has quickly eroded from U.S. Army doctrine as other priorities have emerged. As intelligence collection capabilities continue to expand, deception becomes more difficult yet could be decisive in winning the battle for information and misleading potential adversaries. Warfare has in many respects returned to the eighteen century of near complete visibility on the battlefield.⁸ Advanced technology has enabled modern day commanders to see the battlefield clearly through multiple collection systems. Technology may eventually eliminate strategic surprise in the immediate future forcing the increased emphasis on battlefield deception, in order to achieve tactical surprise. The experiences of history has provided numerous examples of military units obtaining surprise through the planned use of deception to gain an advantage over the enemy. It is at the tactical level of operations where surprise can provide the commander the ability to retain or regain the initiative in order to ultimately impose his will on the enemy at the decisive point. Deception may be the only means a commander

has available to counter advanced intelligence collection systems and enable him to achieve superiority at the decisive point in a future conflict.

Arguably, where near complete visibility exists, the requirement for deception is far greater than on the empty [obscured] battlefield.⁹ At present the U.S. Army is re-evaluating it's focus on deception and determining it's application into the twenty first century.

This monograph will examine the current capabilities of U. S. Army at the division level to conduct successful battlefield deception operations at the tactical level and implications for twenty first century warfare. This study is organized into five sections. Section I will examine deception theory and establish criteria necessary to determine the proper foundation of which deception capabilities should be based on. Section II is focused on selected U.S. Army historical experiences with deception and employment from the period of the Revolutionary War to the present. The purpose of reviewing the U.S. Army historical experience is to gain an appreciation of the evolution of deception operations during various conflicts and understand the basis for determining the proper role of deception in operations and doctrine in the twenty first century. Section III examines and evaluates current deception capabilities within a U. S. Army division. Section IV looks at the possible role of deception on future battlefields. Section V will conclude this study with conclusions and recommendations on improving U.S. Army deception operations at the divisional level and implications for tactical deception.

Section I - Theory

A useful definition of deception is essential for this research and a logical start point for examining deception theory. Joint Chief of Staff Publication 1(JCSP-1) defines deception as those measures designed to mislead enemy forces by manipulation, distortion, or falsification of evidence to induce him to react in a manner prejudicial to his interests. FM 100-5 definition of deception is similar with one notable exception; it replaces enemy forces with enemy decision makers. To understand the meaning of tactical deception which is the focus of this study, it is important to establish a definition of operational deception first. Operational deception operations are conducted to influence the decisions of the enemy commanders *before battle* occurs so the tactical outcome of battles are favorable and subsequently exploitable.¹⁰ The desired end state for operational level deception, is to set the terms of battle in which tactical commanders fight.¹¹ Tactical deception manipulates the decision cycle of the enemy commander in contact, in order to exploit the situation. Exploiting time of day or night, terrain, weather, and specific camouflage and mock up devices, tactical units seek to conceal their activities and formations by using feints , ruses, demonstrations, or other tactical actions.¹² Deception at the tactical level has a goal of hiding activities associated with battle preparation.¹³ The desired end state of a successful deception operation should accomplish all or parts of the following:

- A. Reinforce the enemy's perceived belief.
- B. Distract the enemy's attention from other activities.
- C. Reduce the enemy's ability to clearly perceive and manage the battle.

D. Confuse enemy expectations about size, activity, location, equipment and intent.

E. Achieve surprise.¹⁴

Deception is an affect that creates [an alternative reality] or distorts the reality of the battlefield.¹⁵ A close examination of this statement reveals two distinct and separate effects that deception can produce on the enemy. The first is to inject uncertainty on the enemy. Uncertainty has a tremendous destabilizing effect in an individuals mind. It is only natural and logical to try and gain clarity to every situation before making a decision and proceeding with an action. We dislike uncertainty.¹⁵ Uncertainty causes a partial paralysis, dislocating and numbing one's mental thought processes. It is through the distraction of the commander's mind that the distraction of his force follows.¹⁶

The second effect deception can cause is to give him [enemy commander] a false sense of certainty. The mind is set up and conditioned to accept and believe information that reinforces preconceptions. One can quickly jump to conclusions based on information we want to hear that reinforces our preconceived beliefs. There is a tendency for the mind to be lulled by regularity and routine.¹⁷ Skillful application of false certainty on an enemy can cause him to act in accordance with his own downfall, in a manner that is desired by the deceiver.

Sun Tzu

All warfare is based on deception.

SunTzu

Sun Tzu understood that the mind is the focal point of deception. According to Sun Tzu deception must be conducted on the battlefield to

manipulate the enemy commanders mind. To expand the uncertainty, or instill certainty every action must be designed to give or create a certain impression in the mind of the enemy. Clearly Sun Tzu is acutely aware of the psychological factors that govern the enemy's mind and his perceptions. Sun Tzu maintained that deception operations should be linked to and reinforce the enemy commanders pre-existing beliefs. Deception must be based on a thorough understanding of the enemy's innermost thoughts, expectations, and plans.¹⁸ Successful deception thus results in wishful thinking on part of the enemy commander, as he acts in a way that unknowingly contributes to his own downfall. It gives him a false sense of security. According to Sun Tzu, deception operations should be planned and conducted through controlled actions such as a feigned disorder, withdrawals and noise that can be directly observed on or near the battlefield.¹⁹ Successful deception convinces the enemy to act and do something and not just continue to seek clarity of the situation. Deception can create the effects necessary for achieving surprise on the battlefield. The enemy believes he is acting decisively on a pre-existing belief that is simply reinforced with deception. The enemy commander sets himself up for surprise and thus has weakened himself at the decisive point, when the deceiver properly exploits this condition.

Sun Tzu's fundamental contribution to the theory of deception is twofold. The first is the requirement to reinforce the pre-existing beliefs of your opponent and have him act in a manner that you want him to. This becomes the first theoretical criteria for this research. The second contribution of Sun Tzu to deception theory is using deception as an integral part of a

commander's overall plan and not a separate action or entity. Deception must be part of the operational plan, centrally planned and executed.

Clausewitz

Clausewitz differs significantly from Sun Tzu's appreciation and application of deception. Although Sun Tzu embraced the use of deception at the strategic, operational and tactical levels, Clausewitz saw its utility limited to the tactical level only and invariably linked to surprise. Achieving surprise at the strategic and operational levels were simply too difficult and too costly in the application of resources that were needed elsewhere according to Clausewitz.

Clausewitz wrote "surprise is basically a tactical device, simply because in tactic's time and space is limited in scale." Surprise, Clausewitz noted, becomes the means to gain superiority at the decisive point. This underscores the linkage of surprise and deception contributing to the probability of success at the decisive point. Although hardly an advocate of deception his work does provide a third criteria for deception theory. Clausewitz writes that surprise is more easily carried out in operations requiring little time. With this assertion, Clausewitz is implying that the enemy must react to the deception within a given time frame and prevented from analyzing the effort to uncover its actual intended purpose. Acting within this window provides the best opportunity to achieve measurable success and gain surprise. Michael Dewar in his book the Art of Deception proposes a similar aspect of deception theory. He wrote " The timing of the deception plan is critical; the enemy must be given enough time to react to false information but insufficient time to analyze it so that the

deception and its purpose become apparent.” Deception cannot be employed as a last minute resort.²⁰ The timing of the deception plan is critical to its success and the third criteria of deception theory in this monograph.

Mao Tse Tung

Mao Tse Tung, an advocate of deception wrote, deliberately creating misconceptions for the enemy and then springing surprise attacks on him are two ways of achieving superiority and seizing the initiative.²¹ Misconception, according to Mao equated to providing the enemy commander with uncertainties which lead him into confusion and wrong decisions. This is where deception becomes important — if inaccurate or misleading information is used even by an excellent decision maker, the resulting decision will be inappropriate for the real battlefield situation.²² It means [enemy commander] being unprepared.²³ Mao’s work proposes the linkage of deception to initiative, an essential aspect that enables commanders to impose their will over their opponent on the battlefield. As Mao wrote “There can never be enough deception in war.” Mao’s theory provides the fourth criteria for this research. The target of deception must always be the decision maker; the enemy commander.

Liddell Hart

A fifth criteria for deception theory is provided by Liddell Hart. Hart proposed that deception plans must contain enough truth to appear logical to the enemy.²⁴ Sun Tzu would be in complete agreement with this. The deception effort must maintain a pattern of actions that the enemy should reasonably expect. Actions that appear out of place and out of the norm will be

quickly disregarded as false. Clausewitz would most likely disagree with this criteria as he believed that the expenditure of resources to make the deception appear real at the strategic and operational proved to be too costly and would take away forces required at the decisive point. A fifth criteria for this research is established; the deception operation must appear realistic and conform in a manner to what the enemy could expect from his adversary. The foundation of deception operations discussed by the theorists established for this monograph are:

- A. Reinforce the pre-existing beliefs of your opponent and cause him to take action in a manner you want.
- B. Deception should be planned and executed as an integrated element of the overall operations plan.
- C. The timing of the deception plan is key and critical to the success of the deception effort.
- D. The deception target is always the enemy decision maker (commander).
- E. The deception operation must appear real to the enemy and give him a false sense of assurance that he is seeing what he believes is true.

Establishing the theoretical foundation of deception sets the appropriate framework to begin examination of the U.S. historical experience and evolution of deception within the U.S. Army. The criteria extracted from the theorists will serve as an analytical tool to assist in reviewing this evolution.

Section II U.S. Army Historical Perspective of Deception Operations

The history of United States Army deception operations can be best

described as limited and infrequent in application. Deception is rekindled and reinvented throughout U.S. military history during periods of actual conflict, without ever establishing a perpetual foundation in Army doctrine. The evolution of deception operations within the U. S. Army is derived more from practical experience, than from as a formal part of American military doctrine.²⁵ The revision and publication of FM 90-2 in 1988, was an effort to reemphasize deception in U.S. Army doctrine and training in order to increase war fighting capabilities. From a historical standpoint, deception has been practiced for over two hundred years in the U.S. Army.

Revolutionary War

The essence of deception is that it lets the enemy convince himself that the misleading picture is valid.

Handel

The father [George Washington] of our country, admired for his honesty, could in fact distort the truth when the situation called for it. He demonstrated this repeatedly during the Revolutionary War manipulating the actions of British commanders. General Washington employed the use of spies to obtain information on British troop dispositions and deliberately planted false information to mislead his enemy. During the winter of 1776-1777, Washington deliberately planted false information to a British spy in order to hide the actual disposition and readiness of his forces while encamped near Morristown, New Jersey. By preparing false documents listing his Continental Army strength at 12,000 men instead of the actual 4,000, Washington cleverly provided false information to a Tory agent who reported back to Sir William Howe, the British commander. When he [Tory spy] handed Sir William Howe

the falsified reports, the spy must have thought he had pulled off the espionage coup of his career. The documents convinced Howe that we [Continental Army] were too strong to be attacked and [it] saved us through the winter.²⁶ Deception also played a significant role in the battles at Princeton, Trenton and Yorktown. Washington's use of spies is almost identical to what Sun Tzu wrote "It is essential to seek out the enemy who have come to conduct espionage against you and to bribe them to serve you."²⁷ Washington's application of deception validates one of the criteria established earlier in this research. The target of the deception effort must always be the enemy decision maker and cause him to take action in a way favorable to your intentions.

American Civil War

Always mystify and mislead the enemy.

General Stonewall Jackson

The American Civil War produced an innovative leader who fully appreciated the importance of deception. Confederate General Stonewall Jackson became a strong advocate and practitioner of deception. Jackson understood the importance of introducing a disturbing element into the enemy's plans, and believed that the surest means of winning battles was to upset the mental equilibrium of the opposing leader.²⁸ General Jackson skillfully used demonstrations and ruses to create opportunities for his Confederate forces and mislead his adversaries in the Valley campaign. The use of his cavalry was an unique tactical aspect of the campaign and demonstrates how he integrated deception into his overall plan. Asby's

[Jackson's cavalry commander] squadrons were the means whereby the Federalist were mystified.²⁹ Not only was a screen established which perfectly concealed the movements of the valley army, but constant demonstrations at the distant points, alarmed and bewildered the Federal commanders.³⁰ Jackson's use of deception studied by a British Army officer, Colonel G.F.R. Henderson proved beneficial in the development of British Army deception doctrine and capabilities in World War I and II. Henderson wrote "he [Jackson] learned, in a war, that war is a struggle between two intellects rather than the conflict of masses, and it was by reason of knowledge that he played on the hearts of his enemies with such skill". Jackson's use of his cavalry follows closely with the theory held by Sun Tzu; deception must be an integral part of the overall plan and not a separate action. What was not recognized by those in the American military at the time was not necessarily lost by others elsewhere. The success of British deception efforts in the twentieth century would soon bear this out.

World War I

It is perfectly justifiable to deceive the enemy.
Winston Churchill

Little information is printed on the use of deception by the American Expeditionary Forces [AEF] during World War I with one notable exception. The commander of the AEF, General Pershing directed a fake corps operations order to deliberately fall in to the hands of the Germans. The fake corps order directed VI Corps, under the command of Major General Omar Bundy to begin preparations to execute an attack into the Belfort gap

approximately 125 miles southeast of the St. Mihiel area. The object of the deception effort was to conceal the AEF intentions to concentrate forces elsewhere. Following orders, MG Bundy did so in the belief that the operation was in earnest with orders to conceal his preparation.³¹ The deception proved successful in causing the Germans to reposition heavy artillery and focus defensive efforts away from the actual American attack zone. The effectiveness of the AEF surprise attack on St. Mihiel in part was due to the deception effort. Colonel George C. Marshall at that time the G3 of the 1st U.S. Army assisted in the development of this specific deception plan. Marshall later wrote in the 1934 *Infantry In Battle* stressing the importance of obtaining surprise by all units, regardless of size, in all units.³²

Little effort or progress in the development of deception doctrine or training occurred in the post World War I era within the U.S. Army. Technology would once again dictate revolutionary changes in land warfare doctrine with the introduction of the tank and the mechanization of infantry forces. Deception would evolve slowly until armies realized that the emerging technologies also opened new doors for deception activities.

Advances in aerial photography and the expansion of the communication spectrum in the 1920's and 1930's would eventually lead to these opportunities.

World War II

I feel that deception and cover plans are fully justified and that the employment of cover and deception should be an accepted and organized procedure for any campaign.

General George S. Patton

Deception came of age during World War II, where it became firmly enshrined in the arsenal of standard military practices.³³ The American forces can credit the British for their efforts in the renewed emphasis and employment of deception. During the early stages of World War II, the British used successful defensive deception measures during Battle of Britain to help win this crucial campaign. The brilliant British Eighth Army victory at El Alamein demonstrated the importance of deception in offensive operations to the Allied Command. The British achieved tactical surprise by deceiving the German commander as to the actual location of their pending offensive attack. Using dummies to represent tanks, artillery, logistical vehicles and supplies, along with other deception measures, the British cleverly portrayed a concentration of forces significantly south of their actual attack zone. This effort appeared real and logical to the Germans, who were convinced that the main attack would come in the southern sector. So certain were the Germans that the main attack would come in the south that they retained two reserve divisions in the southern sector for four days after the actual attack had been delivered in the north.³⁴ Finally convinced of the value and contribution of deception the U.S. began developing its capabilities at the strategical, operational and tactical level. At the tactical level, the U.S. Army created the 23d Special Troops unit consisting of an engineer camouflage battalion, one engineer construction company, and one signal service company. The 23d faced numerous challenges in preparing its soldiers to conduct deception operations, with little doctrine to base its training programs on.

Coupled with the fact the 23d officers, who had [previous experience] in commanding 32 ton tanks felt frustrated and helpless with a battalion of rubber M-4s, 93 pounds fully inflated.³⁵ Adjustment from a man of action to a man of wile was difficult for many.³⁶ After completing its first few missions two distinct lessons were apparent to the 23d. The first was that tactic's, techniques and procedures would require an extended evolution. The unit had to reassess its progress and continue to adapt after every mission; in this trial and error period. Second, if deception was new to the 23d its capabilities were completely unknown to the rest of the Army.³⁷ The 23d soon found out it needed to send out liaison officers to educate commands on the capabilities of the unit and its external requirements. Field commanders were reluctant in allocating resources to something they could not easily measure tangible results. Despite the many challenges the effectiveness of the 23d improved steadily throughout the war and achieved significant success in Operation Bettemberg. The 23d misled the Germans in believing that the 6th Armored Division [fictional unit] defended along an actual gap in the American lines, in an effort to prevent the Germans from repositioning units in response to the XX Corps attack on Metz.³⁸ In all the 23d conducted 21 deception operations during World War II before being inactivated in September, 1945.

Perhaps the biggest and most successful deception operation of World War II centered on the Normandy invasion. Working in concert with its Allies, OPERATION BODYGUARD and its component parts, the U.S. participated in

the most ambitious deception plan in the history of warfare - the plan to protect OVERLORD, the Allied invasion of France in June 1944.³⁹

Fortitude South's objective was to convince the Germans that the main landing would take place in Pas de Calais area of France and cause Hitler to maintain the German 15th Army in the region. The plan succeeded in holding German forces away from the Normandy objectives until allied forces had secured a strong foothold. The plan employed deception measures across the entire spectrum of deceptive art developed during the World War II era. Fortitude South demonstrated the U.S. ability to conduct deception operations at the operational level. This operation validated the theory that reinforcing a pre-existing belief can cause the enemy to act in a manner that contributes to his own downfall. Reflecting on the success of this deception effort Michael Dewar wrote in The Art of Deception in Warfare "It is no exaggeration to say that, had it not been for FORTITUDE SOUTH, the battle in Normandy might well have turned out differently". It was the critical deception.⁴⁰

As the US Army refined its deception tactics, the enemy continued to use deception effectively against our ground forces. In the Pacific theater, the Japanese Army employed simple yet effective tactical deception measures against U.S. Army and Marine forces. Experts in camouflage and trickery, the Japanese would make use of dummy weapon's positions to draw fire away from actual manned positions. Above all, they favored the use of noise to deceive and intimidate.⁴¹ Among such ruses were the sounds of explosions coming from the rear and flanks to make their enemy think he had been surrounded,

and by night they threw Chinese crackers into positions and rattled their rifle bolts.⁴² Battlefield deception had reached a high point in its use.

The tremendous strides made by the U.S. Army in deception, caught the eye of its highest military commander who may have well foresaw its inevitable regression.

“Following the end of World War II, Eisenhower wrote: ...no major operations should be undertaken without planning and executing appropriate deception measures. As time goes on... there is a danger that (cover and deception) may in the future not be considered adequately in our planning. I consider it essential that the War Department should continue to take those steps that are necessary to keep alive the arts of ... cover and deception and that there should continue in being a nucleus of personnel capable of handling these arts in case an emergency arises.”⁴³

Despite this warning, the art of deception slipped away, as the next emergency soon demonstrated.

Korea, 1950 - 1953

What is necessary to be performed in the heat of action should be practiced in the leisure of peace.

Vegetius Military Institution of the Romans

The relative peace of the post World War II years, coupled with the belief that nuclear weapons had forever changed the face of conventional warfare, contributed to the decline of deception operations in American doctrine.

Few efforts were initiated involving the use of deception as the U.S. relied completely on firepower to gain the advantage on the Korean battlefield. The American Army soon found out our enemy still maintained this capability.

The Americans fell victim to a brilliant, yet simple deception plan. In his book,

This Kind of War; T. R. Fehrenbach described how the backward Chinese

Army deceived the most technologically advanced military force of the day.

“The example of one Chinese army, which marched from Antung, Manchuria, to its assemble area in North Korea almost three hundred miles away, explains much: after dark, not sooner than nine o’clock, the Chinese troops began to march. Singing and chanting in the manner of all Chinese, they plodded south, night after night, for eighteen nights. And each night, between nine and three, they covered eighteen miles. When light came, every man, every gun, every animal, was hidden from sight. In the deep valleys, in the thick forests, in the miserable villages huddled on the forlorn plateaus, the Chinese rested by day. Only small scouting parties went ahead by day to reconnoiter the night’s march, and to select the bivouac for the morrow. If aircraft were heard, each man was under orders to halt, freezing in his tracks, until the noise of the engine went away.

In bivouac, no man showed himself, for any reason. Discipline was firm, and perfect. Any man who violated instructions in any way was shot. It was not only cunning and hardihood, but this perfect march and bivouac discipline that caused UN aircraft to fly over the CCF hundreds of times without ever once seeing anything suspicious. Even aerial photography revealed nothing.”⁴⁴

A misplaced Western trust in air surveillance ensured their [Chinese] achievement of total surprise when they eventually descended from the hills on road-bound UN forces in the autumn of 1950.⁴⁵ The U.S. Army had painfully relearned the value of deception.

Persian Gulf War

Deception is common sense soldiering.

General Carl E. Vuono

A successful deception operation in the Persian Gulf war returned attention to this waning art. Unit’s from the U.S. Army’s 1st Cavalry division conducted a feint along the Kuwait and Iraqi border to help deceive the location of the coalition main effort. This tactical action in concert with the operational commanders’ deception plan portraying a Marine amphibious landing along the Kuwaiti eastern coast, enabled U.S. Army ground units to achieve surprise with their envelopment of Iraqi ground forces from their

western flank. Two Iraqi Army divisions continued to maintain a defensive posture along the coast and were unable to reposition to effect the U.S. ground attack.

The deception operation carried out in the Gulf War underlines two of the principals discussed by the theorists in section I. The threat of the Marine amphibious assault and the feints conducted by the 1st Cavalry appeared real and logical to the enemy. The fact the Iraqi failed to reposition to the west bears this out. Secondly, the deception operation was planned and executed as an integrated part of the overall operational plan. Tactical deception planning and execution was a derivative slice of the operational deception plan. Successful deception operations constantly reflect both aspects.

World Class Opposing Force (WCOPFOR)

The WCOPFOR constantly employs deception against U.S. divisions during unit rotations of the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Units learn valuable lessons on deception operations based on Soviet capabilities. U. S. Army units fall well short in recognizing the enemy deception plan and rarely use deception against the WCOPFOR. The unofficial motto of the WCOPFOR, "Trust in Blue" underlines the predictability of the U.S. Army forces and the lack of effective deception plans during the BCTP Warfighters. The WCOPFOR "Trust in Blue" to select the least risky, most favorable and most obvious course of action.⁴⁶ This translates in the immediate loss of initiative by Blue forces.

Two trends have emerged about deception in the two hundred plus years of

experience involving the U. S. Army. First and foremost our reliance on advanced technology may be a key factor in the stagnation of deception capabilities. Deception is not looked upon as a combat multiplier but rather a separate capability. Deception is not a sophisticated weapons system with easily measurable results. It is unique to each situation and requires skill and imagination. As General Eisenhower pointed out, "A nucleus of people capable of performing deception must be available should the next emergency arise". Successful deception isn't dependent on superior technology, its greatness relies on the innovation and the intellect of individuals. Changes in U.S. Army doctrine and warfighting occur more often from advancements in technology providing increased capability, than intellectual growth.

Secondly, our enemies have demonstrated that successful deception plans can be basic. Deception can effectively be carried out by third world nations without advanced intelligence systems. [Tactical] deception is achieved by maintaining radio silence, concealing command and control; displaying and disseminating false information to the enemy; camouflaging and creating dummy troop concentrations.⁴⁷ Useful deception does not require specialized assets. Past adversaries have understood the basic premise that deception ultimately targets a mind instead of an elaborate machine. It is effective in causing the deceived to expend critical resources in a meaningless effort.

The U.S. Army's historical experience with deception, demonstrates that we are vulnerable to deception as our past enemies have proven. Our future enemies will be quick to realize the American obsession with advanced

information systems will be a prime target for their deception efforts in the future. With more acquisition channels to collect and pass information, deception could easily be directed against U. S. Army forces.

Throughout history it, [deception] has successfully supported and enhanced victorious efforts on the battlefield.⁴⁸ The need for utilizing force multipliers and fighting smarter has grown out of recognition of the nature of the threats now facing the U.S. Army.⁴⁹ Based on the historical examples cited earlier in this section, deception is effective in several ways. As demonstrated in the Revolutionary War, deception can enable an inferior force to be portrayed as a strong force. Deception can help hide weakness and superimpose strength. In simple terms expressed by Sun Tzu, "Make the enemy see my strengths as weaknesses and my weaknesses as strengths". Deception must be considered as a key element of force protection when it is used to falsify strength of a weak force.

The British operation at El Alamein and the U.S. efforts during Operation Fortitude South demonstrated that deception can conceal future operations and cause the enemy to position forces away from the actual point of attack. Deception can prevent the enemy from being strong at critical locations. Successful deception convinces the enemy to mass his forces in a position where no attack is planned. Deception operations can effectively allow a commander to achieve mass at the decisive point. Deception can serve fundamentally as an economy of force operation which can pay a large dividend.

Lastly, deception can be a factor in reducing casualties on the tactical battlefield. Deception operations in World War I and in the Persian Gulf War discussed in this monograph, resulted in enemy forces being out of position and unable to effect the outcome of a tactical fight. Creating favorable conditions with deception will ultimately help reduce casualties. Future planners must consider this aspect and consider deception as an element of force preservation in appropriate situations.

Deception has future application for the U. S. Army as the premier land component power in the world. Force protection, force preservation, and its effectiveness in achieving superiority at the decisive point underlines deception's value into the twenty first century.

Section III

Building from the theoretical and historical deception foundation discussed in the prior sections, Section III will examine and evaluate present deception capabilities within U.S. Army .

Leadership & Education

Mens Est Clavis Victoriae / The Mind Is Key To Victory.

Motto of the School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Once the force is engaged, superior combat power derives from the courage and competence of the soldiers, the excellence of their training, the capability of their equipment, the soundness of their combined arms doctrine and above all, the quality of their leadership.⁵⁰

Past U.S. Army deception efforts were due in large part to the creativity and initiative of individual commanders on the battlefield. With no formal

doctrine and institutional training to serve as a guide, bold commanders like General Stonewall Jackson were innovative in using deception to create opportunities to exploit. Were the deception plans of Jackson a risk he assumed or were they an inseparable part of his concept of operations?

Revitalizing the leaders in the United States Army on the art of deception may be the biggest challenge that lays ahead in returning deception as a practiced art in the U.S. Army.

The importance attached to a particular skill in any army can usually be judged by the training time, manpower, and resources dedicated to it.⁵¹ All combat arms officers in the U. S. Army receive formal tactical training at their basic and advanced courses, specific to their particular branch of assignment. Combat arms officers attend the basic course immediately following their commissioning and normally attend the advanced course with 3 to 5 years of active service. In reviewing the program of instruction for both the armor and infantry officer basic and advanced courses at Fort Knox and Fort Benning there is no formal instruction on deception operations.⁵² Selected officers at the grade of promotable captain and major (11-14 years) attend the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. The mission of the staff college is to prepare officers for duty as field grade commanders and principal staff officers at division and corps.⁵³ The school devotes a meager two hours to deception training, with the focus at the operational level of deception only.

The officer education system does not teach its students the principals of deception and requires them to develop their skills in planning exercises and training events.⁵⁴ A noted Soviet scholar, V. E. Savkin, makes an interesting observation on the leaders role on deception. According to Savkin, "It is the

responsibility of leadership to create the conditions under which deception and surprise is possible”.

Mr. Fred Freer working in conjunction with the RAND corporation conducted a study of deception at the NTC during the fiscal year of 1986. His study disclosed that 50 of the 104 evaluated battles at the NTC employed some type of deception operation or deceptive technique.⁵⁵ Freer concluded that successful deception relied on operational competency on part of the leaders. Because failures in operational execution accounted for the fact that attempted deception operations often failed, training in basic operational skills is the priority if greater skill in the use of deception is to be attained.⁵⁶ Leader training on deception operations is a critical step to achieve skill in deception. The study of deception... should play a much more prominent role in the training of senior commanders and military history.⁵⁷

Doctrine

Today [1988], commanders use little deception in planning, directing and conducting combat operations.

FM 90-2, Battlefield Deception, 1988

During the early 1980's, both the Department of Defense(DOD) and the Department of the Army (DA) attempted to revitalize the art of deception as a sustained war fighting capability.⁵⁸ The publication and distribution of FM 90-2 in October of 1988, demonstrated the U.S. Army's initial effort to reach this goal in concert with other initiatives planned. The manual [FM 90-2] set forth the principals associated with battlefield deception operations and explained how to plan and execute such operations at the operational and tactical levels of war.⁵⁹ Although the primary manual for deception doctrine, FM 90-2 has numerous shortcomings. The manual reads more like a historical essay on

deception than doctrinal literature.⁶⁰ FM 90-2 is inadequate in describing force structure capabilities and limitations to help guide commanders and staffs in deception planning and execution at the tactical and operational level. The integration of deception planning into the military decision making process a considerable deficiency noted in the 1988 edition will be discussed in detail later in this monograph. The 1988 version of FM 90-2 must be considered to be of limited utility as a reference for tactical deception operations. It does not provide tactics, techniques and procedures, which links doctrine with equipment and force structure, a critical omission.⁶¹ A review of FM's at the battalion, brigade, and division level arrives at a similar conclusion. Current Army doctrinal manuals provide little if any direction in tactics, techniques and procedures.

After the deactivation of the Battlefield Deception Office (BDO) at Fort Huachuca, Arizona in 1988, the Combined Arms Center (CAC) at Fort Leavenworth assumed proponentcy of deception doctrine. With almost 10 years of doctrinal ownership on deception, CAC has yet to produce a revised manual. Recognizing the absence of a tactics, techniques and procedure manual for deception, CAC doctrine writers are currently working to produce a deception chapter in the upcoming revision of FM 100-6-1, Informational Operations, which is projected for publication in fiscal year 99. The intent of the deception chapter for FM 100-6-1 is to provide tactical commanders and staffs a "how to guide" for the employment of deception measures.⁶²

A critical decision to rescind the 1988 version of FM 90-2 in May of 1997, by the Director of Corps and Division Doctrine at CAC will undoubtedly contribute to an erosion of deception skills at the tactical and operational level throughout the U. S. Army. The rescission of FM 90-2 leaves the U. S. Army without a principal source manual on deception. The rationale behind the decision to rescind FM 90-2 is; the information contained in this publication no longer represents valid Army doctrine.⁶³

FM 100-5 the Army's keystone warfighting manual provides only a one paragraph definition of deception, which was previously stated in this monograph and refers to FM 90-2 for the details on battlefield deception. This key manual (FM 100-5) fails to establish the linkage of deception as an integral part of offensive and defensive operations. Although FM 100-5 has two chapters dedicated to the fundamentals of the offense and defense it falls well short in establishing deception's role as a combat multiplier to both types of operations. Chapter 7, Fundamentals of the Offense, mentions feints and demonstrations, but describes these types of attacks as diversionary operations and only vaguely ties them to deception operations. The cornerstone U.S. Army warfighting manual fails to adequately explain how deception is invariably linked to the commander's overall concept and how commanders should consider using deception as a means to gain tactical and operational advantages.

It [doctrine] provides an officially sanctioned framework for common understanding, dialogue, training, learning and most importantly action.⁶⁴ Doctrine permeates the entire organizational structure of the Army and sets the direction for modernization and the standard for leadership development

and soldier training.⁶⁵ The absence of a creditable doctrine breeds inaction within military organizations and individuals. The transfer of deception prophecy to CAC has done little to enhance the body of deception knowledge throughout the U. S. Army.

Organizational Structure

Good deception costs something.

Hans von Greiffenberg

In January 1986, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School (USAICS) activated the Battlefield Deception Office (BDO) at Fort Huchuca, Arizona. This office provided the initial framework and input to establish force structure and equipment requirements of division and corps deception cells. The U.S. Army began fielding deception cells in corps and division units in the late 1980's based on the recommendations of the BDO and USAICS. The deception cells in a mechanized or armored division consisted of a battlefield deception headquarters element, plans and operations cell, communication signature team, physical signature, and electronics signature team. With the equipment fielding of M1& M2 multi-spectral close combat decoys (MSCCD) the capability to plan and execute deception operations was jump started throughout the Army at the tactical and operational level.

How effective are the deception cells at division in assisting commanders with integrating deception into their operations and training, since their activation in the late 1980's. The Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) provides a partial answer.

The BCTP Operations Group compiles observations annually to determine trends observed during unit rotations. The observations are published in its annual Perceptions pamphlet. Comments extracted from their Perceptions publication for fiscal year 1995 indicate that deception operations are not executed and if attempted are unsuccessful.⁶⁶ Additional trends mentioned include the predictability of units and the courses of action selected by U. S Army units were obvious to the opposing forces.⁶⁷

In January of 1997 the deception cells at corps and division were dropped from the modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE). This included all deception organizational cells in the heavy, light, airborne and air assault divisions or corps. Battlefield deception cells became the bill payer for the fielding costs and personnel structure of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV).

The loss of battlefield deception cells within the division structure signals a regression in deception emphasis at the tactical and operational level. Without specialized experience and expertise on division staff's, it will be increasingly difficult to develop and execute realistic deception operations. G3 plans sections will assume this responsibility completely without the augmentation of a specialized staff cell. This will undoubtedly lead to problems in integrating deception into the overall concept of operations.

The equipment capability is also lost from the organizational structure. The MSCCD's will eventually become discarded as the maintenance support and replacement capacity is withdrawn from the Army logistical structure due

to this organizational deletion. The loss of the MSCCD's degrades the ability of a U.S. Army division to conduct deception in two critical areas. First, visual deception capability is reduced as the MSCCD's provided a realistic, low cost projection of the deception story to the enemy. The majority of the potential enemy threats obtain information via ground observation. The British deception operation at El Alamein demonstrated this fact. Secondly, commanders will be forced to allocate real M1's/M2's to achieve effective visual deception, a cost in resources many commanders may be unwilling to commit. Additionally, an insufficient sized force may be tasked for the deception operation and appear unrealistic to the enemy commander.

Military Decision Making Process

A common reminder from historical experience and deception theorists alike, is the theme that deception must be an integrated part of the planning and execution of the operational plan. The Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) is a tool to assist commanders and staff's in decision making and producing a plan for military operations. The primary product the staff produces for the commander, and for subordinate commanders, is understanding, or situational awareness.⁶⁸ Little if any concrete guidance is found in U. S. Army manuals on what analysis is needed initially during the MDMP that will assist the commander and his staff understanding the situation and in turn using this appreciation to develop a deception plan. The shortcomings in deception integration in the MDMP starts with the mission analysis brief. According to FM 101-5, Staff Organization and Operations

manual, the mission analysis briefing is critical to the MDMP as it allows the commander to begin his battlefield visualization. Both FM-101-5 and FM 90-2 failed to address what the staff, should provide to the commander in the way of initial analysis on deception for the mission analysis briefing. The seventeen steps of the mission analysis brief outlined in FM 101-5 leaves out this critical aspect. The staff has a responsibility to provide the commander with a start point to help him formulate his guidance on deception. The staff, primarily the S2\ G2 should answer two questions for the commander to understand the situation. The initial intelligence analysis must include a determination of what the enemy expects the friendly force to do. More simply stated, the intelligence officer provides a snapshot of what the enemy commander anticipates as the friendly course of action. This provides a secondary benefit to the commander in determining possible course of action guidance to the staff. The commander may decide to direct the staff to develop friendly courses of action that are unexpected by the enemy commander or unpredictable to him. This could be a significant factor influencing the commander's deception story; he may elect to reinforce a preconceived belief held by the enemy commander depending on the analysis provided. This has proven to be an effective way to use deception throughout history. Secondly, the S2/ G2 analysis during the mission brief should include what the friendly force wants the enemy commander to believe about what the friendly force is doing. Providing an estimate on both questions allows the commander a departure point for his guidance on deception following the end of the mission

analysis brief. The commander is in an informed position to provide specific guidance on how many and what type of resources he is willing to commit to portray his deception story, if he agrees with the initial assessment made by the staff or makes modifications. The staff needs to help the commander in more ways than the current or lack of doctrine suggests in the MDMP.

Deception functions properly only if the staff elements involved fully coordinate their efforts toward support of their commander's decision making.⁶⁹ The commander needs analysis to ignite the deception planning process.

Additionally this methodology could contribute significantly in ensuring that deception is integrated early into the planning process, before the maneuver course of action is selected by the commander. The deception story needs to be carefully timed to provide feedback to the commander to confirm or deny that the enemy is acting in the manner we want him to. Again, this aspect is part of deception theory discussed earlier in this monograph. Feedback from the enemy reaction to the deception story should be considered in the same manner as information obtained from the reconnaissance focus. It is plugged back into the MDMP and brief to the commander to assist in refinement of his plan similar to how information on priority intelligence requirements is processed.

The MDMP must include a feedback mechanism to ensure the deception effort is producing the desired effect or has resulted in the enemy acting in a manner not expected. The MDMP should include this to assist the

commander in further decision making during the process. The commander must be aware of what resources are required to provide this feedback to him. The staff must assist him in determining the allocation and employment of these assets. With the loss of specialized deception cells this becomes a significant challenge. [U.S. Army divisions] lack the necessary resources to formulate and later verify the efficacy of the deception.⁷⁰

Section IV

Future Implications

1. U.S. Army tactical deception operations must take in account of the multiple overhead surveillance systems that are rapidly becoming available on a rent for cash basis by several nations. Future deception activities executed at the tactical level must factor in this additional capability that our potential enemies may have. This implies a deception plan that increases in complexity and detail to counter not only the Imagery systems but the SIGINT aspect as well. Increased integration of all deception capabilities is a requirement to achieve success with deception on the 21st century battlefield. Tactical commanders and their staffs must understand and analyze the implications of the multiple channels the enemy will employ to gather information in his efforts to determine friendly intentions.
2. The use and exploitation of the international media to enhance our tactical deception efforts must be examined carefully. The media will be everywhere the U.S. Army is involved in combat operations, providing instant reporting to a complete world audience. Commanders at the tactical level must consider

how to leverage the media to assist in delivering the deception story to the enemy decision maker. The timing of the deception activities will become a critical component if tactical commanders use the media as a part of the deception operation. The media is yet another avenue to pass the deception story on to the enemy.

3. The challenging and technical nature inherent with deception in the future warrants a specialized career field with a functional area assigned to it. This should be part of the officer restructuring initiatives included in the Officer Professional Management System (OPMS) 21. Ever increasing threat collection systems provide part of this mandate, as the art of deception will rise to a new level of technical sophistication. A deception career field that is component part of information operations will help ensure sufficient expertise is available on the division staff.

4. U.S. Army divisions must anticipate and expect to use deception to counter a numerically superior sized opponent in the next major conflict. Three factors will be present in the future which make this a reality. The U.S. Army no longer has a large robust force in it's active ranks. Future force reductions which are inevitable, due to weapons modernization programs will continue to chip away at the size of the active force. Secondly, the shift of U.S. Army divisions to CONUS and the implications of a force projection army will delay the build up of ground combat forces in overseas locations. Lastly, given the lessons learned from the Persian Gulf War, our enemies will initiate hostilities prior to the combat force. To achieve superiority at the decisive point in future

conflicts, deception at the tactical level will become an absolute necessity.

5. Deception may not be feasible for the majority of OOTW activities, nevertheless has selective utility in some of the OOTW missions. OOTW activities that have a strong potential for conflict, primarily attacks and raids, show of force and non-permissive noncombatant evacuations could include deception to enhance success on these operations. Deception employed within a force protection framework could depict a larger force for show of force operations and noncombatant evacuation missions. Attacks and raids might incorporate deception to draw enemy forces away from specific objectives providing protection for the assault force.

As the U.S. Army continues to operate in OOTW environments, deception can prove its worth as a combat multiplier, on selective OOTW operations and should be a capability that commanders have available to them.

Conclusions

The U.S. Army has closed the door on its deception capabilities at the division and corps level, after its removal of the staff deception cells. After a brief reemergence of tactical deception in the late 1980's to 1996, deception has fallen victim to other pressing needs within the Department of the Army.

U.S. Army doctrine will continue to call for the use of deception, which will fall on deaf ears. With an officer education system neglecting the art of deception in the classroom and the absence of a creditable doctrine, the future for U. S. Army divisions having the capacity to conduct successful deception is not promising. The deletion of deception staff cells coupled with the loss of

equipment assets further erodes this capability. Given the present era of constraint budgets it is unlikely to foresee any reemergence or development of organizational and equipment deception structure at the divisional and corps level in the near future. The U.S. Army has abandoned its deception capability at the tactical level.

Recommendations

To preserve the ability to conduct tactical deception in the U.S. Army, the following measures should be implemented:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of opposing forces deception techniques demonstrated at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California and the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana and extract lessons for instruction at all combat arms and combat support advanced course students. This will serve to instill basic deception skills in company grade officers prior to commanding companies.
2. Study the WCOPFOR's use of deception during BCTP Warfighter rotations and integrate lessons learned in the instruction of CGSC and SAMS students. Increase the amount of operational and tactical deception instruction and practical work at both schools.
3. Provide specialized deception training for officers serving in Information Operational field, as part of the realignment of the officer corps under OPMS 21. Assign these individuals to division and corps G-3 plans sections. This will provide an expert on the division staff to ensure commanders have qualified individuals who can advise them on deception plans. The ever increasing sophistication of information gathering systems mandate specialized training.

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